

Docket No. AUS9-2000-0592-US1

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

**METHOD, APPARATUS, AND PROGRAM FOR SERVER BASED NETWORK
COMPUTER LOAD BALANCING ACROSS MULTIPLE BOOT SERVERS**

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A method, system, and program is provided to redirect a client computer to an appropriate boot server after it has been directed to any initial boot server by preboot execution environment (PXE) or similar services. An apparatus includes a data file containing a set of addresses of managed boot servers in any syntax and a program file containing a network bootstrap program (NBP) that interprets the syntax of the data file. These files are placed on every initial boot server. The NBP requests a file from the initial boot server whose name is identified with the client computer. The initial boot server will not return that file if it is not an appropriate server for booting the client. In that case, the NBP requests the data file containing the boot server addresses. The NBP then polls each of those boot servers by requesting the client's unique file. A boot server that returns the file is an appropriate boot server for the client computer. The data file containing boot server addresses is changed to reflect current boot server load balancing requirements without involving the configuration or affecting the availability of PXE or similar services.

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